

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, CY, TU, GR

SUBJECT: GREEK-TURKISH MINORITIES ISSUE RECEIVES ATTENTION

1. PUBLICITY SURROUNDING LEAKS ON THE CONTENT OF THE REPORT
BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (ECHR) OF THE COUNCIL
OF EUROPE, REPORTEDLY CONDEMNING TURKISH VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN
RIGHTS ON CYPRUS, HAS REVIVED CHARGES AND COUNTERCHARGES IN
CONNECTION WITH THE TREATMENT OF THE MINORITIES IN GREECE,
AND TURKEY, RESPECTIVELY. AT THE SAME TIME AS PRESS STORIES
APPEARED HERE ON THE COMMISSION'S STUDY, THERE WERE ALSO RE-
PORTS WITH COMMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO TURKISH SOURCES CHARGING GOG
MISTREATMENT OF THE TURKISH (OR AS THE GOG PREFERS TO REFER
TO IT, THE MUSLIM) COMMUNITY IN WEATERN THRACE AND SUGGESTING
THAT THE GOT WOULD SEEK TO INDICT GREECE IN ONE OR ANOTHER
INTERNATIONAL FORUM.

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2. IN APPARENT REACTION TO THESE TURKISH ALLEGATIONS, OPPOSITION
UNION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CENTER (UDC) DEPUTIES RAISED IN
JANUARY 18 THE QUESTION OF THE WELFARE OF GREEKS IN TURKEY,
AND COMPLAINED THAT THE GOG WAS NOT PURSUING A SUFFICIENTLY
BOLD POLICY IN DEFENDING THEIR RIGHTS. TWO UDC DEPUTIES,
VIRGINIA TSOUDEROU (WELL KNOWN FOR BEING IN THE FOREFRONT ON

MANY HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN GREECE) AND JOHN PAPADOPOULOS, CLAIMED THE TURKS CONTINUE TO VIOLATE THOSE PROVISIONS OF THE 1923 TREATY OF LAUSANNE WHICH GOVERN THE STATUS OF THE MINORITIES. THEY REPEATED THE NOW FAMILIAR REFRAIN THAT THE GOOD TREATMENT AFFORDED THE MUSLIMS IN WESTERN THRACE HAS LED TO THE LATTER'S REMAINING--AND EVEN INCREASING IN NUMBERS--IN CONTRAST WITH THE GREEK POPULATION IN TURKEY WHICH HAS BEEN SEVERELY DIMINISHED BECAUSE OF THE OPPRESSIVE TREATMENT IT HAS RECEIVED AT THE HANDS OF THE TURKS. AS EVIDENCE, THE DEPUTIES CITED THE FOLLOWING STATISTICS:

-- 120,00 TURKISH NATIONALS NOW IN WESTERN THRACE COMPARED TO 105,000 IN 1934.

--10,000 GREEK NATIONALS PRESENTLY IN CONSTANTINOPLE (ISTANBUL) CONTRASTED TO 110,000 PLUS 350 NOW IN SMYRNA (IZMIR AS OPPOSED TO 4,000 IN 1934.

--1,400 GREEKS CURRENTLY ON THE ISLAND OF IMVROS AGAINST 7,500 IN 1934.

--240 GREEKS ON THE ISLAND OF TENEDOS PRESENTLY AS AGAINST 3,000 IN 1934.

3. UDC LEADER GEORGE MAVROS ALSO JOINED IN THE DISCUSSION AND REPROVED THE GOG FOR NOT "HANDLING THE QUESTION BOLDLY ENOUGH" AND FOR FAILURE TO PROTECT GREECE'S RIGHTS ABROAD MORE EFFECTIVELY. HE MAINTAINED THAT TURKISH ACTIONS IN RECENT YEARS CREATED A WIDER PROBLEM WHICH AFFECTED WORLD PEACE.

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HE ALSO CONTENDED THAT ALTHOUGH TURKEY HAD SIGNED THE CSCE FINAL ACT, IT VIOLATED ITS PROVISIONS CONSTANTLY BY OCCUPYING 40 PERCENT OF CYPRUS WITH ITS TRIIPS. AS FURTHER PROOF OF TURKEY'S FAILURE TO LIVE UP TO THE SPIRIT OF HELSINKI, MAVROS REITERATED THE CHARGE HE HAS MADE FREQUENTLY IN THE PAST THAT TURKEY IS KEEPING 120 LANDING CRAFT AND AN ENTIRE ARMY IN THE AEGEA AREA, WITH THE IMPLICATION THEY ARE AIMED AT GREECE.

4. RESPONDING TO THESE CHARGES, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER STAVROPOULOS STATED THAT HE SHARED THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY THE OPPOSITION ABOUT THE GREEK MINORITY IN TURKEY. HE THEN DEFENDED THE GOG'S RECORD, STATING THAT THE FILE ON THE PLIGHT OF GREEK RESIDENTS IN CONSTANTINOPLE AND ON THE ISLANDS OF IMVROS AND TENEDOS "IS NOT CLOSED" AND WILL REMAIN OPEN UNTIL A SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT IS ACHIEVED. HE UNDERLINED THAT GREECE HAS REPEATEDLY PROTESTED TURKISH VIOLATIONS OF THE TERMS OF THE TREATY OF LAUSANNE, SAYING THAT SINCE JULY 1974 ALONE THE GOG HAD MADE 48 DEMARCHE ON THE SUBJECT. HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT GREECE HAD COMPLAINED TO UNESCO LAST YEAR ABOUT

"OPPRESSIVE MEASURES" CONCERNING THE EDUCATION OF GREEKS ON IMVROS AND TENELOS. THE MATTER HAD ALSO BEEN TAKEN UP BETWEEN THE RESPECTIVE FOREIGN MINISTERS, HE ADDED. IN CONCLUSION, STAVROPOULOS NOTED THE ISSUE WAS A "VERY GRAVE" PROBLEM, THAT HE COULD NOT ELABORATE FURTHER, AND ASKED FOR THE UNDER-STANDING OF PARLIAMENT.

5. COMMENT: SO FAR THE MINORITIES QUESTION HAS NOT BEEN INCLUDED, OFFICIALLY AT LEAST, AMONG THE VARIOUS ISSUES UNDER DISPUTE BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY, ALTHOUGH EACH SIDE HAS, FROM TIME TO TIME, CHARGED THE OTHER WITH MISTREATMENT OF ITS NATIONALS RESIDENT IN THE OTHER COUNTRY. IT IS QUITE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT SHOULD TURKEY BRING CHARGES AGAINST GREECE IN THE ECHR OVER THE ALLEGED TREATMENT OF THE TURKISH MINORITY IN THRACE, THE GOG BELIEVES IT HAS A STRONGER CASE TO MAKE AGAINST THE TURKISH TREATMENT OF THE GREEK MINORITY IN TURKEY.

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